

My Grandmother's Slops Bucket

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My grandmother kept a slops bucket
behind a curtain of blue-flowered calico cloth
tacked over the bottom shelf in her kitchen pantry,
all day filling it with bacon fat, egg shells,
sour milk, plate scrapings,
iodine odor filling hot kitchen,
at evening carried out and dumped
into the zinc hog trough,
sows and piglets scrambling through
the rutted mud squealing to jam their
snouts in the luscious swill –
that's why I write, to capture the haze
of gnats and flies swirling above the pigs
eating their fill.